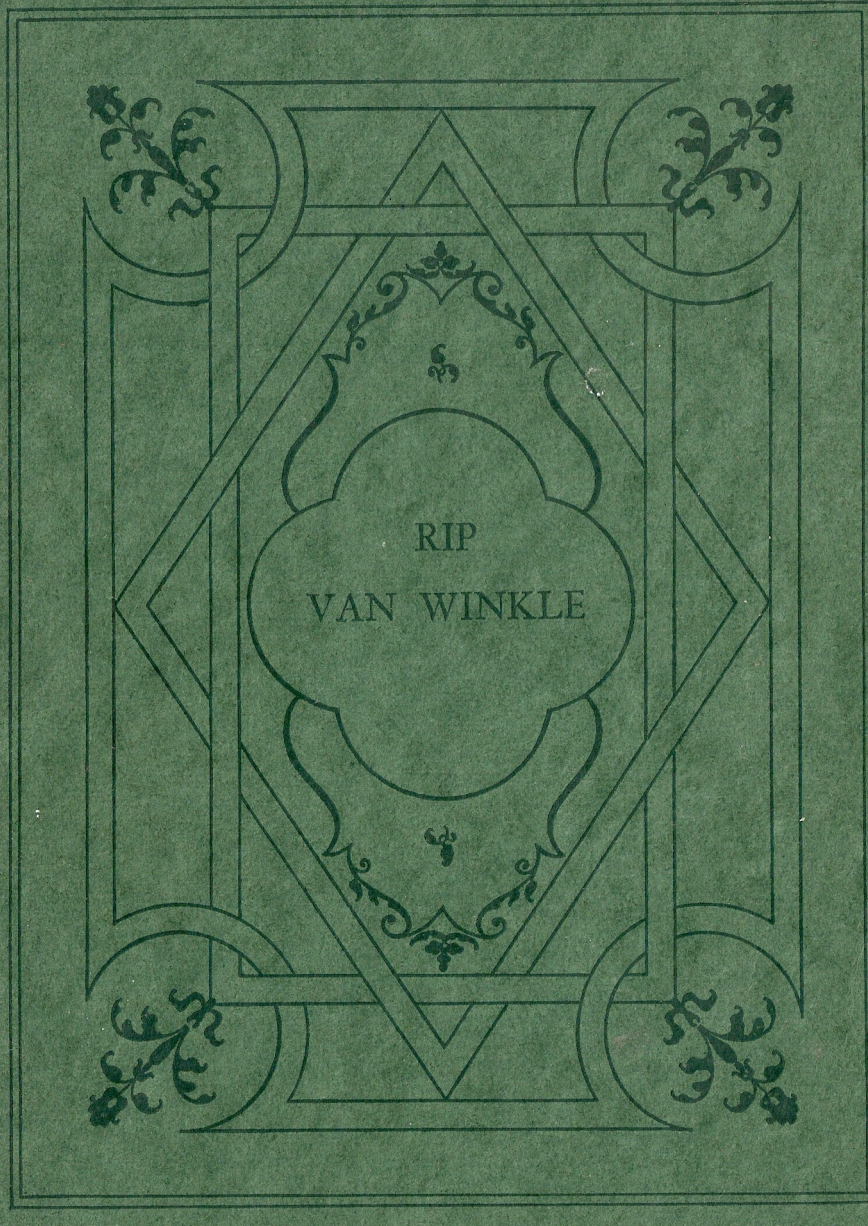
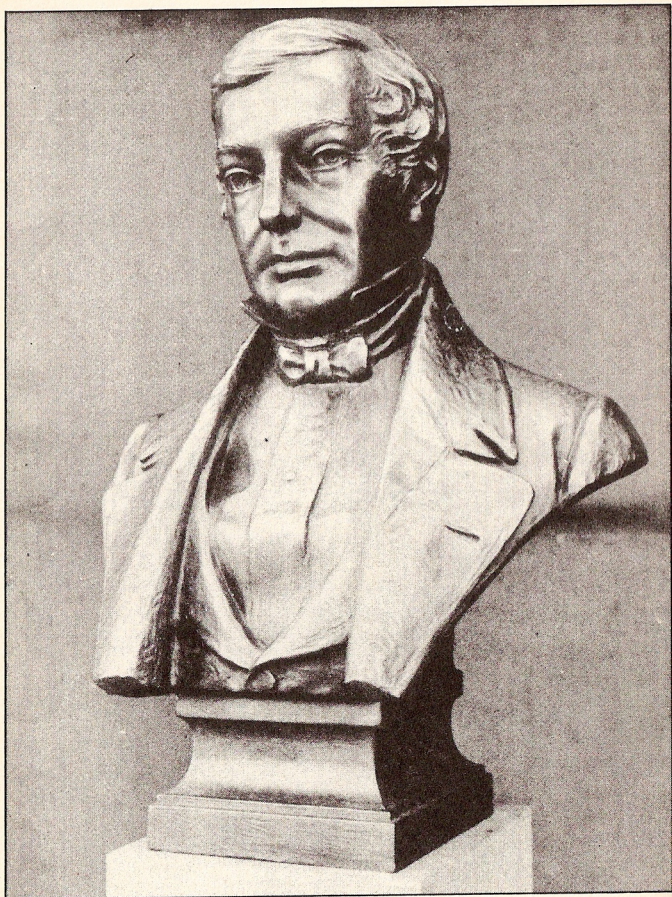




RIP
VAN WINKLE



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WASHINGTON IRVING

Bust placed in The Hall of Fame, May 5, 1927

RIP VAN WINKLE

By

WASHINGTON IRVING



THE GREGG PUBLISHING COMPANY

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SHORTHAND PLATES WRITTEN BY
WINIFRED KENNA RICHMOND

Printed in the United States of America

RIP VAN WINKLE

RIP VAN WINKLE is as familiar to most of us as Santa Claus or Cinderella or Mary's Little Lamb. That familiarity, indeed, is Washington Irving's great achievement. He has written a story so convincing, he has created in Rip Van Winkle a character so real, that the reader accepts the story and the character as veracious.

More than a century has gone by since Irving conjured Rip Van Winkle out of his fertile imagination. During that century short stories have poured forth, apparently, from every pen. No character out of all these countless thousands of stories has ever attained the secure position in the language that almost immediately was bestowed on Rip Van Winkle.

The highest tribute an author can receive is the reception of one of his words or characters into the language. How often we see Rip Van Winkle used in cartoons, for instance, as a symbol of the man or country that has allowed an opportunity to go by because

of not being wide-awake. How often we hear the name used facetiously, applied to someone who perhaps has overslept or who does not come immediately when called. The meaning of the name is perfectly familiar even to those who have never read the story.

This cannot be said to the same extent of any other character in fiction. Many of the characters of Dickens have the same rank and significance in Dickensian circles. Uriah Heep, for example, is an eminently descriptive name, but it will be recognized only in definitely literary circles, whereas the name of Rip Van Winkle is meaningful to practically every person who speaks English by right of birth.

The story of Rip Van Winkle was announced by Washington Irving as having been found "among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker." This statement requires a little explanation.

In the mind of nearly every American, "Knickerbocker" stands for New York just as "Uncle Sam" stands for the United States. The book that established Irving's reputation was "A History of New York," by Diedrich Knickerbocker, published in 1809. It was intended first as a parody on a certain serious history of New York. It developed into a comic history of the city under Dutch rule. This book was supposed to have been written by one Diedrich Knickerbocker. According to the story given out in advance of the publication of the book this Diedrich Knickerbocker had

run off without paying his board bill and had left nothing valuable except a manuscript of "A History of New York" which was to be published to pay his debts. The wiles of the press agent evidently were already rather well developed more than a hundred years ago.

Thus it was this early press-agent stunt that established the word "Knickerbocker" as synonymous with "New York." In cartoons the figure of Father Knickerbocker is always recognized as personifying New York. There are no less than 105 entries beginning with "Knickerbocker" in the New York directory — from the Knickerbocker Adjustment Company at the head of the list to the Knickerbocker Yarn Company at the foot of the list. So great an impression did Irving carve into our American life and language!

When "A History of New York" appeared it created a great sensation and immediately established Irving's reputation. Although written nearly ten years later, the story of Rip Van Winkle was attributed by Irving to this same completely fictitious Diedrich Knickerbocker, as will be seen by the introduction to the story and also by the note and postscript at the end of the story. These are printed in type in this book as they have no direct connection with the story itself, but they will be found interesting when read with the story.

It is rather surprising to know that not only is Rip Van Winkle one of the best short stories ever written but it is also one of the

very first short stories, in the sense that we use the term "short story" today. Apparently this art form sprang into being almost full blown, as certainly in all the years that have elapsed since the first publication of Rip Van Winkle nothing has yet surpassed it in its own field.

Not only was Irving a pioneer and master of the short story but he was also one of the earliest and best historians and biographers in the history of American letters. His interests, historically, lay in Spain. For several years he was attached to the American diplomatic corps in Spain. This experience gave him every opportunity for research into Spanish history. Even his work on "Mahomet and His Successors" was written because of the Moorish influence of Spain.

One of the finest stories (we hope it is true) about any man of letters is the one telling of Irving's renunciation of his plan to write a book on the Spanish conquest of Mexico. For years he had been collecting materials for a book on that subject. Just as he was beginning the work he heard that a young man by the name of Prescott was also working on the same topic. In order to give the newcomer a better chance Irving laid aside his own work. This action seems to be typical of the man and explains why he was universally liked by his contemporaries.

After Irving's death William Makepeace Thackeray, the great English novelist, wrote about him:

The good Irving, the peaceful, the friendly, had no place for bitterness in his heart, and no scheme but kindness. Received in England with extraordinary tenderness and friendship (Scott, Byron, Southey, a hundred others have borne witness to their liking for him), he was a messenger of good will and peace. . . . Of his works, was not his life the best part? In society a delightful example of complete gentlemanhood; quite unspoiled by prosperity; eager to acknowledge every contemporary's merit; always kind and affable to the younger members of his calling; in his professional bargains and mercantile dealings, delicately honest and grateful; one of the most charming masters of our lighter language; to men of letters doubly dear, not for his wit and genius merely, but as an exemplar of goodness, probity, and pure life.

The reading of English classics such as this written in shorthand is not only interesting but very valuable for a number of reasons. Most important for us, of course, is the shorthand benefit to be gained. The reading of well-written shorthand is perhaps the nearest approach one can find to a royal road to shorthand skill. Obviously we cannot write good shorthand unless we have a mental picture of good shorthand. The only way to attain this mental picture of good outlines is to read attentively as much good shorthand as possible. Reading and rereading these pages of good outlines fixes them in the mind. Then when the words are heard in actual dictation the shorthand outlines are readily available.

Another advantage to be obtained from this practice in reading is the improvement in shorthand penmanship. To many it seems strange that *reading* shorthand should increase skill in *writing*.

The answer to this apparent paradox is that, contrary to a commonly accepted but erroneous idea, shorthand is written not with the hand but with the head. If the mind does not know what it wishes the hand to write, the hand will be helpless. Only the constant reading of really good shorthand notes will stock the mind properly with the necessary store of shorthand pictures.

It is also true that the reading of English classics in shorthand is much more resultful than the reading of those same stories in print. When we read shorthand it is necessary to pay closer attention to the context than when reading print. Also when reading these shorthand stories it is usual to read them a number of times in order to fix the shorthand outlines in mind. The fact that the reading is repeated, combined with the fact that each time it is read more attentively, means that every phrase and turn of thought is more firmly grasped than if it were in print, hastily skimmed over once or twice.

Let us remember, then, that in reading "Rip Van Winkle" in shorthand time after time we are killing at least three birds with the one stone: (1) We are stocking our minds with shorthand outlines that will increase our speed of writing; (2) we are fixing in our minds standards of shorthand penmanship that will increase the beauty and legibility of our writing; (3) we are improving our knowledge of and our ability to use the English language—the most important working tool the shorthand writer has in his kit.

RIP VAN WINKLE

A POSTHUMOUS WRITING OF DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER

By Woden, God of Saxons,
From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodens-
day.
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
Unto thylke day in which I creep into
My sepulchre.—*Cartwright.*

The following tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New York, who was very curious in the Dutch history of the province, and the manners of the descendants from its primitive settlers. His historical researches, however, did not lie so much among books as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty on his favorite topics; whereas he found the old burghers, and still more their wives, rich in that legendary lore so invaluable to true history. Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farmhouse under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little clasped volume of black-letter, and studied it with the zeal of a bookworm.

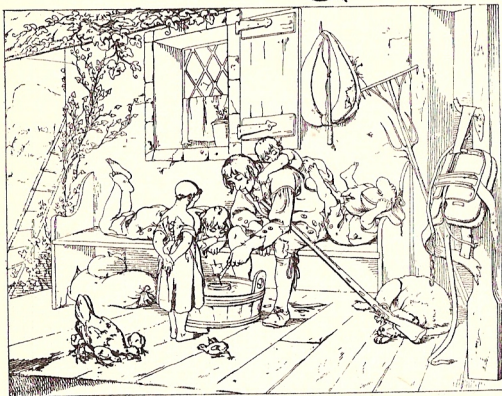
The result of all these researches was a history of the province during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he published some years since. There have been various opinions as to the literary character of his work, and, to tell the truth, it is not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned on its first appearance, but has since been completely established; and it is now admitted into all historical collections, as a book of unquestionable authority.

The old gentleman died shortly after the publications of his work, and now that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much harm to his memory to say that his time might have been much better employed in weightier labors. He, however, was apt to ride his hobby his own way; and though it did now and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbors, and grieve the spirit of some friends, for whom he felt the truest deference and affection; yet his errors and follies are remembered "more in sorrow than in anger," and it begins to be suspected that he never intended to injure or offend. But however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still held dear by many folk, whose good opinion is worth having, particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone so far as to imprint his likeness on their new-year cakes; and have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to the being stamped on a Waterloo Medal, or a Queen Anne's Farthing.

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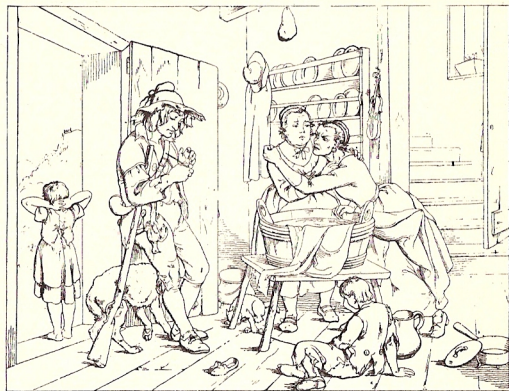
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 He was a very
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The old man, who had been
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 was now a very old man.



The old man, who had been
 in the army for many years,
 was now a very old man.

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I have been thinking of you
 very much lately, and
 wondering how you are getting on.
 I hope you are well and happy.
 I have been very busy lately,
 but I have not forgotten you.
 I have been thinking of you
 very much lately, and
 wondering how you are getting on.
 I hope you are well and happy.
 I have been very busy lately,
 but I have not forgotten you.



NOTE

The foregoing Tale, one would suspect, had been suggested to Mr. Knickerbocker by a little German superstition about the Emperor Frederick *der Rothbart* and the Kypphauser mountain; the subjoined note, however, which he had appended to the tale, shows that it is an absolute fact, narrated with his usual fidelity.

“The story of Rip Van Winkle may seem incredible to many, but nevertheless I give it my full belief, for I know the vicinity of our old Dutch settlements to have been subject to marvelous events and appearances. Indeed, I have heard many stranger stories than this, in the villages along the Hudson; all of which were too well authenticated to admit of a doubt. I have even talked with Rip Van Winkle myself, who, when last I saw him, was a very old venerable man, and so perfectly rational and consistent on every other point, that I think no conscientious person could refuse to take this into the bargain; nay, I have seen a certificate on the subject taken before a country justice and signed with a cross, in the justice’s own handwriting. The story, therefore, is beyond the possibility of doubt.

“D. K.”

RIP VAN WINKLE
POSTSCRIPT

The following are travelling notes from a memorandum-book of Mr. Knickerbocker:

The Kaatsberg, or Catskill Mountains, have always been a region full of fable. The Indians considered them the abode of spirits, who influenced the weather, spreading sunshine or clouds over the landscape, and sending good or bad hunting seasons. They were ruled by an old squaw spirit, said to be their mother. She dwelt on the highest peak of the Catskills, and had charge of the doors of day and night to open and shut them at the proper hour. She hung up the new moons in the skies, and cut up the old ones into stars. In times of drought, if properly propitiated, she would spin light summer clouds out of cobwebs and morning dew, and send them off from the crest of the mountain, flake after flake, like flakes of carded cotton, to float in the air; until, dissolved by the heat of the sun, they would fall in gentle showers, causing the grass to spring, the fruits to ripen, and the corn to grow an inch an hour. If displeased, however, she would brew up clouds black as ink, sitting in the midst of them like a bottle-bellied spider in the midst of its web; and when these clouds broke, woe betide the valleys!

In old times, say the Indian traditions, there was a kind of Manitou or Spirit, who kept about the wildest recesses of the Catskill Mountains, and took a mischievous pleasure in wreak-

ing all kinds of evils and vexations upon the red men. Sometimes he would assume the form of a bear, a panther, or a deer, lead the bewildered hunter a weary chase through tangled forest and among ragged rocks; and then spring off with a loud ho! ho! leaving him aghast on the brink of a beetling precipice or raging torrent.

The favorite abode of this Manitou is still shown. It is a great rock or cliff on the loneliest part of the mountains, and from the flowering vines which clamber about it, and the wild flowers which abound in its neighborhood, is known by the name of the Garden Rock. Near the foot of it is a small lake, the haunt of the solitary bittern, with water-snakes basking in the sun on the leaves of the pond-lilies which lie on the surface. This place was held in great awe by the Indians, insomuch that the boldest hunter would not pursue his game within its precincts. Once upon a time, however, a hunter who had lost his way, penetrated to the Garden Rock, where he beheld a number of gourds placed in the crotches of trees. One of these he seized and made off with it, but in the hurry of his retreat he let it fall among the rocks, when a great stream gushed forth, which washed him away and swept him down precipices, where he was dashed to pieces, and the stream made its way to the Hudson, and continues to flow to the present day; being the identical stream known by the name of the Kaaters-kill.



NOTES ON THE STORY

PAGE

- 2 *Peter Stuyvesant*, one of the best known and most important governors of the New Netherlands, from 1647 to 1664 under the Dutch rule.
- 4 *termagant*, quarrelsome, scolding.
- 6 *fowling-piece*, a gun intended for shooting birds.
- 7 *galligaskins*, loose breeches or stockings.
- 9 *fain*, glad, well pleased.
- 10 *a gallows air*, a guilty look as though he were going to the gallows to be hanged.
- 11 *junto*, a clique or faction, usually political.
- 13 *virago*, a termagant, a quarrelsome woman.
- 16 *skulked*, sneaked.

- 17 *jerkin*, a short coat or jacket.
- 17 *grizzled*, gray.
- 19 *doublets*, close-fitting garments for men.
- 19 *sugar-loaf hat*, a hat shaped like the loaves in which sugar used to be sold.
- 20 *hanger*, a small sword.
- 21 *flagons*, drinking vessels.
- 22 *Hollands*, liquor made in Holland.
- 23 *firelock*, a gun that was fired by the spark caused by an iron or steel hammer hitting a piece of flint.
- 23 *roisters*, revelers.
- 29 *connubial*, pertaining to marriage, and used here facetiously.
- 30 *a red night-cap*, this refers to the red "Liberty Cap" which the American colonists borrowed from the French Revolution.
- 31 *phlegm*, sluggishness.
- 31 *Babylonish jargon*, referring, of course, to the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis II.

- 33 Tory, one of the colonists who remained loyal to the British government.
- 34 *Anthony's Nose*, a promontory in the Hudson River near West Point. In Irving's humorous "History of New York" he tells how the promontory received its name: "It must be known, then, that the nose of Anthony the trumpeter was of a very lusty size, strutting boldly from his countenance like a mountain of Golconda. . . . Now thus it happened, that bright and early in the morning the good Anthony, having washed his burly visage, was leaning over the quarter railing of the galley, contemplating it in the glassy wave below. Just at this moment the illustrious sun, breaking in all his splendor from behind a high bluff of the highlands, did dart one of his most potent beams full upon the refulgent nose of the sounder of brass—the reflection of which shot straightway down, hissing hot, into the water and killed a mighty sturgeon that was sporting beside the vessel. . . . When this astonishing miracle came to be made known to Peter Stuyvesant he . . . marvelled exceedingly; and as a monument thereof, he gave the name of Anthony's Nose to a stout promontory in the neighborhood, and it has continued to be called Anthony's Nose ever since that time."

40 Hendrick Hudson . . . the great city called by his name, this is
apparently a slip of the pen. The City of New York was
never called after Hudson. There is a town of Hudson,
New York, situated on the river of the same name, but it
is not "a great city."

41 cronies, intimate companions.

42 torpor, loss of sensibility or of power of motion or of feeling.

